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BOYLE FARM.

A POEM.

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FOURTH EDITION.

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1827.

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THE era in the fashionable world which is celebrated in the following poem, was one so striking and brilliant, and the poem itself is so graceful, spirited, and characteristic of the high society which it delineates, that the publisher has thought that he could not perform a more acceptable service to the beau monde than by pre-

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26, Holles-street, Cavendish Square, Nov. 3, 1827.

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THE

FOLLOWING STATEMENT

IS FROM THE LITERARY GAZETTE, IN WHICH THIS IN-TERESTING POEM ORIGINALLY APPEARED.

B-E F-M, or BOYLE FARM, was famous in the annals of last fashionable season, for a fête given there by some five persons of the highest ton. The supreme pleasures to be enjoyed on such occasions can only be surmised by those who undergo the operation of attending them,—can only be guessed at by the cruel envy



BOYLE FARM.

A POEM.

		1

BOYLE FARM.

Thou sentient tube, whose secret spell

For sixpence Brougham explains so well,

That from the kitchen to the attics

Each household dabbles in pneumatics!

How have I watched thy liquid ore,

And bow'd thy mystic shrine before,

To learn, if so the gods allow'd,

The destiny of sun or cloud,

Decreed by kind or angry heaven

For June the thirtieth, twenty-seven!

Long had the falling glass requited

That hapless race the uninvited,

Who placed their pleasure and their pride in

The subtle mercury's subsiding.

In taunting tone they spoke their trust,

"That storms like these would lay the dust.

A hundred water-carts prepared!

At least that outlay may be spared."

Thus gibed they, and condemn'd us all

To misery and a wet Vauxhall.

Meek hope and humble faith despises

Such warnings.—Lo! the index rises;

The joyous face of heaven the while

Resumes the universal smile,

Which neither heaven nor man deny

To thee, good-humour'd A—y.

Oft have I seen in Biscay's main,

When head to wind some ship has lain,

Sore struggling with the tempest's forces,

With masts made snug and close-reef'd courses,

Sudden exulting sailors hail

The omens of a favouring gale,

Stay-sail and flying gib unroll'd,

Quit the dark caverns of the hold;

To shake the reefs out every hand

Is busy, every yard is mann'd—

Till like a butterfly she sweeps,

With all her mighty wings, the deeps.

'Tis thus from bandboxes and presses

Confiding Beauty culls her dresses,

And more determined forth she draws The snow-white slip, the virgin gause. Pledge of her trust in wind and weather. She bids it droop, the graceful feather, Fearful no more lest rain should spoil it, That pride of all the morning toilette: Bracelet and chain conclude the list Round the fair neck and loaded wrist, Of various mineral and mould, Iron from Berlin, India's gold, Vienna's talismanic signs. The Koran's efficacious lines.

Sure, when the dress of former ages
Our children's scrutiny engages,
When antiquarians explore
The bracelets which their mothers wore,
Some future bard will rise to praise
The female strength of former days,
And show this weight of golden fetters,
To prove their grandmothers their betters.

'Tis done; the last has left its place

Of rest in that red oblong case,

Whose well-known form and hue explains

So well the treasure it contains;

And, as the taper wrist it rounded,

Gently the clicking clasp has sounded.

Now, each amusement antedating,

I see her at the window waiting,

Like ship for fight or speed prepared,

Her sails all bent, her yards all squared;

Which, mann'd with hands and hearts all able,

Lies with a spring upon her cable,

And waits the telegraph's command,

To gain her offing from the land.

Soft, ere the carriage step descends,

And ere her course the Muse attends,

And, following close the Briskha's rattle,

Pursues her to the press of battle,

I crave permission for expressing

My parting wishes, and my blessing.

Heaven send, to sooth her chaperon's cares,

Presumptive and expectant heirs;

And 'midst them that less frequent treasure, A partner who can keep the measure! May others still remain enraged To find her through the night engaged; May locks at mid-day curled, at two Remain untouch'd by damp or dew, Which make all tresses droop and drip so, The curl'd, the crepé, and Calypso! My charm is said, my blessing done; I trust not idly breathed on one Whom Nature, Maradan, and Kitching Have toil'd alike to make bewitching.

Oh, Maradan! thy fame refuses The utmost efforts of the Muses: For, not like mine, thy midnight taper Was lit for waste of ink and paper, But for those works which Pallas loved, For which her zeal the goddess proved, By quickly changing to a spider The luckless rival who defied her. For weeks within thy shop, they say, Thy maidens turn'd the night to day; Assistants and élèves were tired. And countless 'prentices expired;

Needle in hand, 'tis said, they died on,

Till every dress was shaped and tried on—

Till flounce and flower had found their station,

And every gown its destination.

Oh! why, but for the sad prevention

Of my unfortunate invention,

Why, but to bother, vex, and bore me,

Did Moore perform my task before me?

Why did he ever make us hear

Of Nourmahal or of Cashmere?

Oh! why has poet e'er composed

A strain so sweet and so be-rosed,

When I have need to count the noses

Of all the words which rhyme to roses,

Before I e'en can sketch the charm

Of thy solemnity, Boyle Farm!

So at the Opera, at a venture,

Some fair one's box perchance we enter,

And find one seated to his mind there,

Him whom we least would wish to find there;

The man whose speech's dangerous powers

We think alone can master ours;

The man who leaves each topic dry,

Then flings it down for us to try;

Who pillages of wit and zest

Our own anticipated jest;

With pity and composure treats us;

In short, who in a canter beats us.

Thus, in my own case, ill I brook

To see thy author, Lalla Rookh,

Before I e'en have started at her,

Close seated by my subject-matter.

I wish to heaven we had them here,

Dear Moore, your beauties of Cashmere!

If at Boyle Farm I once could catch them,

And did not in ten seconds match them,

Let those for whom I sing disown me,

And like the Bacchanalians stone me

Yes, bring her here, the flower of all,

The caliph's favourite, Nourmahal;

She who now hangs upon my arm

Shall meet and match her, charm for charm,

Though none can say, that by selection

I offer'd her that arm's protection;

And none can call my terms unfair

If chance has placed the loveliest there.

Let Lawrence judge—my life upon it,

The turban yields it to the bonnet.

Though 'tis the right of our profession

Still from digression to digression

To stray, reflection summons back

My Muse to gain her proper track.

First let that Muse impartial state,

When coaches have discharged their freight,

When through the grounds the guests have stray'd,

And each preparative survey'd,

Why are such wistful glances sent

To yonder regimental tent.

The fairy Peri Banou gave

That tent to her young prince, the slave

Of more than mortal beauty's spells,

As old Arabia's legend tells.

I know not by what chance the Blues

Have stepp'd into Prince Ahmed's shoes.

It once sufficed for Eastern nations

To smoke their pipes and eat their rations;

The sultan, court, and all the forces,

Here ate, and slept, and held discourses;

But to a peace establishment

The Blues reduced this mighty tent,

And Gunter lays around its poles

His covers for five hundred souls.

With Byron's hero I agree In this. My tent is more to me Than is that deck'd conservatory, Where peers and princes, in their glory, Partake the feast, and see their state Reflected back from fretted plate; Where those who lately made a din By throwing corn out, throw it in. I have no wish to dine by ticket; I love to wander, and to nick it, And gain by stratagem or skill The very chair I wish to fill.

Here freedom reigns, no George and garter From me with solemn bow can part her, Whose smiles, not lessen'd by champagne, Inspire as now my harmless strain, And for the moment brighter make me Than that for which most mortals take me. I love, 'mid noise of forks and dishes, To speak my sentiments and wishes. When Midas to the reeds preferr'd them, The sedges blabb'd, and all men heard them. But with a whisper not too loud, And head towards the cutlet bow'd,

I keep each ear but one from gleaning The least iota of my meaning. How reason's power, how logic's force, . Increases in the second course! How tongues are loosed, so late unable To stir when fish was on the table! If 'twere, as it is not, my cue Some gentle object to pursue, I ask no strange advantage sequent On something wondrous or unfrequent; I ask not in the dangerous wave First to upset her, then to save;

I ask not midnight's silent hour,

The perfumed air, the moonlit bower,

(Though these were useful aids to seize on,

For passion's triumph over reason,)

Of all the twenty-four to win her,

Grant me, kind Heaven, the hour of dinner!

Tis evening now, the sun is sinking,

To warn us from protracted drinking.

You lighted, boarded, chalk'd pavilion

Is destined for the gay cotillon.

How with an Eastern air it stands, Like some gay hall on Ganges' sands Reminding veterans from India Of Dowla, Ragonaut, and Scindiah, And halls where Rajahs of Benares Are wont to play their dull vagaries! No dull ones ours; not e'en to me, Who since the gout has seized my knee Have ceased my dancing. Still I love To beat the measure as they move, And fix a critic glance on those Whose awkward limbs and leaden toes

Still while they live must fail to find it,

Still dart before, or lag behind it,

And baffle music's choicest sounds

By wily turns and desperate bounds.

The stray we for awhile to hear

The strong-limb'd, green-capp'd mountaineer,

Or yield at once the melting soul

To Caradori's barcarolle;

Or while from shore the mortals stare on,

Let me accept the place of Charon,

And raise, while joyous souls I ferry,

The lay of my enchanted wherry.

- "See, my bark has long been waiting,
 Prompt to sail at beauty's call;
 Hush your scruples, cease debating,
 Enter, there is room for all;
 But her builder never meant her
 To receive the vulgar throng:
 Wit, and song, and beauty, enter;
 Gaily then she glides along.
- "Ask not what my bark can carry;

 Ask not how she steers her way;

 Starry lamps, and eyes more starry,

 Guide the helmsman on his way.

From the rising waters shrink not,

Though too nearly they approach;

Wit, and song, and beauty, sink not,

Though rebellious waves encroach.

"There are voices here to charm them,

And the eyes which they reflect,

Of their terrors can disarm them;—

See, the waves have learnt respect.

Now sit fast: the chain I sever,

Which confines us to the shore,

Hearts of lighter burden never

Laughing Pleasure's lifeboat bore.

"Pleasure's gayest chaplets crown us;

What can then awake our fears?

A sigh might sink, a tear might drown us;

What to us are sighs or tears?

If amidst us Care be coiling,

Find the deepest pool for him;

Plunge him where its depths are boiling;

"Care would call me vagrant, rover,

Ask me where I shaped my course.

Seize the miscreant! fling him over!

Answering him would make me hoarse.

Fear no murder-Care can swim.

Pear not. None have ever found me

Doubtful where to lead my crew;

By the eyes which beam around me

I can read the compass true.

"Float we now by yonder willow;

Never dew-bespangled trees,

Bending low to kiss the billow,

Wept such radiant drops as these:

Scarce so bright in her lamenting

Eye of widow'd love appears;

Eyes of Magdalen repenting

Shone less brightly through her tears.

"To receive the stream we float on

Would the sea did not exist;

Would that I might urge my boat on.

Still for ever where I list!

But the voice whose spell, delighting,

First seduced me from the shore,

Now to new pursuits inviting,

Bids me moor my bark once more."

And hark! a novel sound surprises;
In air the warning rocket rises.
'Twas thus, on Leipzic's awful night,
When warring Europe paused in fight,

The fiery sign mysterious rose,

Ill understood by all but those

Who knew by previous information;

It told them that another nation,

With forward Blucher in its ranks,

Was station'd on Napoleon's flanks.

How quick that warning sound has made

A desert of each lonely glade!

Each silent walk and half-lit alley

Are dull as Johnson's happy valley;

Forlorn of every living thing

The Indian cottage and the spring.

In one be-shawl'd, be-feather'd cluster, Upon the river's banks they muster, To view, not glimpses of the new light, But rocket, Catherine-wheel, and blue-light. Thus, when some leader, to make good His station, fills a neighbouring wood With those insidious troops in green, Whose powers are sooner felt than seen; If suddenly his own position The foe should threaten with perdition, The bugle sounds; o'er all the plain The scatter'd masses close again;

Kicking their steeds with all their feet, The skirmishing hussars retreat, Resume the sabre from the side, And sling the carbine as they ride. Then from the bristling square once more The musquetry's collected roar, In one tremendous chorus, stifles The drooping fire of scatter'd rifles. Triumphs of carbon and of nitre, None ever saw or wished ye brighter! How sweet, for those like me, who love To catch the moments as they move,

To watch the coruscations buoy'd

An instant on the murky void,

The next, by gravitation's power,

Melt in their gorgeous golden shower!

But most I love to turn and gaze

On all that mimic day displays,

On eyes that watch that fiery levin,

And saint-like glances turn'd to heaven,

Brows to the fleeting glare exposed,

And lips in rapture half unclosed.

^{&#}x27;Tis thus my recollection paints

The sight of Milan's thousand saints.

Martyr and monk, each sculptured form,

Though thunder-drops were round me plashing,

I work to watch the lightning's flashing,

If have now a momentary brightness

I'm have no see morable whiteness.

and for my tyre!

The spent its fire,

The expire.

· w-wincolling;

Yet shall the parting bard his due Absolve, illustrious five, to you! The warmest thanks in verse the dullest, And may the open hand be fullest: May all your purses, such my wish is, Be unexhaust'd as your dishes; May better bards arise than me To sing thy praises, A-y, And sing those too in strains befitting, Who, naught forgetting or omitting, . Concentrated, with magic powers, A year's amusement in six hours.

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